

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Congressman Jeff Fortenberry today issued the following statement concerning Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak's resignation from office:

"America stands for the right of the Egyptian people to realize their highest aspirations, and today's news of President Mubarak's resignation marks the most significant moment in Egypt's recent history.

"Yesterday, I was stunned by President Mubarak's decision to remain in office, as were the Egyptian people. Today, I think he made the right decision for the future of Egypt, and fortunately, there was no major escalation in violence. I am hopeful that the Egyptian military, now in power, will follow through on recent promises to amend Egypt's constitution, implement democratic changes, investigate the acts of violence that ensued in recent weeks, and advance an orderly and peaceful transition.

"The key pillars of democracy are respect for human rights and the rule of law, and it is my hope that institutional processes that undergird these tenets will evolve to maintain peace and consolidate Egypt's historic role as an ongoing moderating force in the Middle East. Former Egyptian President Anwar Sadat laid down his life for this peace, and it is fundamental to the stability of the region.

"It is also essential that democratic reforms in Egypt are inclusive of minorities, particularly women and Christians. Although some groups, such as the Muslim Brotherhood, want to restrict their civic engagement, a just and peaceful outcome will respect the rights of democratic participation for all citizens. This is clearly the outcome that protesters are seeking to achieve."

Fortenberry, who lived near Tahrir Square in Cairo, is the Vice Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Subcommittee with jurisdiction over Africa, and a member of the Subcommittee on the Middle East and South Asia.

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